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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/09/2038
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASCCH](#) [CMGT](#) [ECON](#) [KOLY](#) [OVIP](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: BEIJING 2008 SUMMER OLYMPICS: USG SITUATION REPORT
9, 08/09/2008

REF: A. BEIJING 3035
[1](#)B. BEIJING 3049
[1](#)C. BEIJING 3060

Classified By: DCM Dan Piccuta for reason 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) The following cable provides information on security, public diplomacy, political, and consular activities related to the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games as of 08/09/2008.

[1](#)2. (U) The interagency USG Joint Operations Center (JOC) can be contacted on a 24-hour basis at the following numbers:

- JOC Direct Line: 011-86-010-6532-6966.
- U.S. Embassy Beijing: 011-86-010-6532-3431, JOC extension [1](#)6200.
- JOC fax: 011-86-010-6532-4763.
- STE and fax: 011-86-010-6532-5163.

KEY ISSUES

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games kicked off at 8:08 p.m. on 08/08/2008 with a successful Opening

Ceremony. Over 90,000 spectators at the National "Bird's Nest" Stadium witnessed an event that featured thousands of drummers, floating Olympic rings, and acrobats who seemed to defy gravity, as well as highlights of China's history and culture. A U.S. Embassy officer and USG Diplomatic Security Field Liaison Officers (FLO) present in the stadium confirmed the existence of concentric rings of robust Olympic security measures, including multiple ticket checks, the use of facial recognition technology, and bag and body searches with handheld magnetometers. Despite the large crowd, the security measures were not time-consuming and the Embassy officer reported that it took only 14 minutes to move from the parking area through the security checkpoints.

¶4. (SBU) The U.S. Embassy's American Citizen's Services (ACS) was notified at approximately 1300 hours on 08/09/2008 about the stabbing of three Americans at the Drum and Bell Tower in the Dongcheng District of Beijing. One of the victims has died of their injuries while the other two have been taken to Peking Union Hospital. According to the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC), the victims are the father-in-law, mother-in-law, and wife of an assistant coach of the U.S. Men's volleyball team. Preliminary information suggests that the incident was a murder-suicide; however, specific details regarding the incident, including the motive of the attacker, are unknown at this time. U.S. Embassy officers, including medical staff, have been dispatched to the scene and to the hospital to assist the family.

SECURITY ISSUES

¶5. (U) Incidents: Suspicious Package in Hong Kong: According to Hong Kong's South China Morning Post, Hong Kong police cordoned off part of the Causeway Bay station--one of the city's busiest train stations--on 08/08/2008 after a suspicious package was discovered there. The Regional Security Officer (RSO) in Hong Kong advised that officers of the Hong Kong Explosive Ordnance Disposal Bureau evacuated the area and detonated the object; they later confirmed that it was a hoax bomb made from three wires taped to a signal flare. Police have stated that the incident was not connected to the Olympics or to terrorism and a spokesperson for the railway station indicated that there were no injuries or damage to the station during the incident. Causeway Bay is a large shopping district located next to Victoria Park, which contains a large screen television where the public could watch the Olympics Opening Ceremony.

¶6. (U) Air China Bomb Threat: According to the Hong Kong AFP, an Air China passenger plane en route to China on 08/08/2008 was forced to return to Japan after the airline's Tokyo office received an e-mail from an unidentified individual threatening to crash Air China flights into Olympic sites. Xinhua, China's official state media, subsequently reported that five Air China flights that had been delayed at Japanese airports were allowed to depart after police searched the aircraft and found no explosives. Air China ordered other flights from Japan not to take off until their security could be ensured.

¶7. (S) Threats: Bomb Threat Near Beijing: According to tearline information, "Olympics security forces in Beijing were aware of a possible bomb threat on 08/08/2008. The threatened attack was to take place within three miles of Beijing, and may have been planned by Tibetan separatists." For additional information, please refer to the 1700 Threat Integration Center (TIC) Olympics situation report dated 08/08/2008, which is available via the National Counterterrorism Center's NCTC Online site.

¶8. (SBU) Olympic Protests: Pro-Tibetan Demonstrators Detained: Three American members of the pro-Tibet group Students for a Free Tibet (SFT) were detained the evening of 08/08/2008 and deported on 08/09/2008 for attempting to unfurl Tibetan flags near the National Stadium (the Bird's Nest) shortly before the start of the Opening Ceremony. Following the incident, SFT posted a press release, photographs of the protest and bios of the three protesters

on its website (<http://freetibet2008.org>). At approximately 2140 hours the same night, a representative of SFT called ACS to report the detentions and to provide information on the protesters. The caller had previously informed ACS about two Americans who unfurled "Free Tibet" banners on a light pole near the Bird's Nest on 08/06/2008. (Note: The above three, as well as the two Americans deported for hanging "Free Tibet" banners and the American of Tibetan descent who was turned around at Beijing Capital International Airport on 08/07/2008, are all affiliated with Students for a Free Tibet. End Note).

¶9. (U) Protest at Corporate Event: According to information available to Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) representatives in the JOC, on 08/08/2008 demonstrators unfurled a banner at a U.S. Olympics corporate sponsor event in Beijing's Chaoyang Park. According to an eyewitness, three men and one woman of possibly Nepalese, Northern Indian or Western Chinese ethnicity attempted to display two banners in English, Chinese and several other languages. When asked by event security to desist, the protesters asked to stay but ultimately departed the area. Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers briefly spoke with the protesters and allowed them to leave without detaining them.

¶10. (SBU) Olympic Protest Zones: U.S. Embassy officers conducting routine observations of Beijing's designated protest zones have noted no significant activity in those areas. As previously reported, it is unclear how many, if any, applications for protest have been approved by Chinese officials.

¶11. (U) Protests in Hong Kong: A number of protests occurred in Hong Kong on 08/08/2008 in advance of the Olympics Equestrian Events Opening Ceremony. According to the South China Morning Post (SCMP), political activist Matt Pearce scaled Hong Kong's Tsing Ma Bridge and hung two banners calling for freedom, democracy, and human rights in China. Pearce, who is reportedly known to dress up as Spiderman and other characters when conducting protests, was subdued by firefighters and detained for questioning. Later in the afternoon, a group of Chinese dissidents conducted a "Citizen's Walk," holding pro-democracy banners and shouting slogans for freedom. Additional demonstrations are reportedly expected on 08/09/2008, when members of the "Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Democratic Movements in China" will protest near the Sha Tin Olympic venue to draw attention to China's human rights record. Separately, SCMP reported that unidentified Chinese dissidents plan to "test immigration control at the Lo Wu border during the Olympics."

¶12. (SBU) Worldwide Protests: According to information available to Diplomatic Security, there was a significant uptick in China-related protests in the U.S., coinciding with the 08/08/2008 Opening Ceremony. In San Francisco, Buddhist monks carrying Tibetan flags led several hundred protesters on a march across the Golden Gate Bridge. In New York City, approximately 750 members of the Tibetan community gathered in front of the Chinese Mission to the UN and the Chinese Consulate. In Chicago, approximately 350 Tibetan demonstrators marched to the Chinese Consulate to protest the treatment of Tibetans in China. In Washington, DC, a small crowd demonstrated in front of the new Chinese Embassy. Protests also occurred elsewhere around the globe. In Turkey, a member of China's Uighur minority set himself on fire in front of the Chinese Embassy in Ankara. In New Delhi, nearly 3,000 Tibetans shouted anti-China slogans during a protest near India's parliament and in Nepal, larger-than usual crowds gathered in front of the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu on 08/07/2008 and 08/08/2008 to protest for religious freedom in Tibet. (Please see Kathmandu 891, dated 08/08/2008, for additional information on the Kathmandu protests.)

¶13. (SBU) FLOs Present During Opening Ceremony: USG Diplomatic Security FLOs provided situational awareness reporting from the National Bird's Nest Stadium throughout the Olympics Opening Ceremony on 08/08/2008. The FLOs were originally assigned to accompany the U.S. Olympic team during the Ceremony but were forced to attend the event as spectators after Chinese officials earlier in the week denied their request for venue access (ref. b). The FLOs were seated in proximity to the field and one level below the VIP section; four additional FLOs were strategically stationed on the Olympic Green to provide support in case of an incident. They observed that the security within the stadium was adequate to the event, given the size of the crowd and the atmosphere.

¶14. (SBU) USG Olympic Personnel in IPC: The Deputy Olympic Security Coordinator (DOSC) for Diplomatic Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigations' (FBI) Olympic Coordinator were located in the Chinese International Police Center (IPC) during the Opening Ceremonies. The DOSC monitored the event with police counterparts from a number of nations, including Great Britain and New Zealand. The IPC was set up by Chinese authorities to facilitate the sharing of law enforcement information between countries with Olympic equities.

¶15. (SBU) Accreditations Received: On 08/09/2008, the Olympic Security Coordinator (OSC) received the four remaining accreditations for Qingdao FLOs; the credentials were originally delayed by processing issues (ref. a). All other FLOs received their credentials on 08/04/2008 and have been deployed to the Olympic venues. A field test of FLO radios will be conducted on 08/09/2008.

¶16. (S/NF) Increased Security for Opening Ceremony: On 08/08/2008, the U.S. Defense Attache Office (DAO) in Beijing observed three times as many security personnel in Tiananmen Square and on the Olympic Green for the Opening Ceremony as had been stationed in these locations during ceremony rehearsals. The increased numbers included the presence of Beijing police and People's Liberation Army (PLA) units. The use of People's Armed Police (PAP) cadets and PLA forces at outer perimeter points at the Olympic Green indicate that more experienced units were potentially relocated to Tiananmen Square for crowd control. Despite the security presence at the Olympic Green, some lapses did occur; at the start of the Opening Ceremony, DAO personnel reported that security forces partially lost control of over 100 Chinese civilians who ran up the Fourth Ring Road exit to gain access to the road running up the west side of the Olympic Green. (Please see IIR 6 814 1772 08, dated August 8, for additional details.)

¶17. (C/NF) Hong Kong CBRN Response in Place: As of 08/01/2008, a Chemical Biological Radiation Nuclear (CBRN) Response Group had been set up in Hong Kong, headed by the Hong Kong Discipline Services (HKDS). Within the HKDS, the Hong Kong Explosive Ordnance Division is the first responder that assesses and reacts to any potential or actual CBRN threat. There are also large-scale decontamination sites erected at two main Olympic venues, Sha Tin and Beas River. The two sites are in addition to the one in the Sheraton Hotel where many athletes will be housed. The equipment will remain on standby throughout the Olympics. (Please see IIR 6 842 0461 08, dated August 8, for additional details.)

VIPS

¶18. (SBU) USG Delegation: The USG Delegation to the Olympics Opening Ceremony, headed by the President of the United States, attended the Olympics opening event without incident on 08/08/2008. The Delegation is scheduled to depart Beijing on 08/11/2008.

¶19. (SBU) Other U.S. VIPs: Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney arrived in Beijing and attended the Opening Ceremony on 08/08/2008. Prior to his departure from the United States, Romney made public comments criticizing

China's decision to revoke the visa of former Olympic speed skater Joey Cheek.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

¶20. (U) There was no significant information or activity to report.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

¶21. (U) Please refer to paragraph 4 for information on recent Consular actions.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

¶22. (SBU) Xinjiang Bombing Report Appears to be Inaccurate: On 08/08/2008, Al-Jazeera reported a bombing had killed nine people in Yili, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. U.S. Embassy officers reviewed both local and foreign press for additional information on the alleged incident, with negative results. A U.S. Embassy political officer spoke with an officer at the Yili Public Security Bureau, who stated that she could "definitively guarantee" that there were "no such incidents in Yili."

RANDT